

VT MUNCH TIMES

Coming to a Tray near You!

VT Munch Times is a biweekly newsletter brought to you by the Child Nutrition Team at Vermont Agency of Education, designed to include a USDA Policy update, a fun nutrition fact and up-to-date resources for the coming weeks. Look for these updates every other Thursday!

Munch on this:

Policy Update: 2015 Food Service Equipment Grants

Funds are available to Vermont Schools participating in the School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs and to those schools who wish to implement the School Lunch or Breakfast Program. The grant funds are available as matching funds to support the purchase of food service equipment that will improve the infrastructure of food production and to support the purchase of Computer Point of Sale meal counting and claiming systems to ensure program accountability and integrity. This grant does not apply to equipment that has already been purchased.

Applications must be received at the Child Nutrition Programs office by 4:30 pm on April 4, 2014.

To access the application and more information, click on this link:

<http://education.vermont.gov/nutrition/school-nutrition/funding>

Nutrition News: I am Iron Man!

The human body needs iron to make the proteins hemoglobin and myoglobin which carry oxygen throughout the body. Hemoglobin is found in red blood cells and myoglobin is found in muscles. Iron deficiency, called anemia, is a higher risk in young, rapidly growing children, adolescents with inconsistent eating habits, and in women who are menstruating. Iron can be found in dried beans, dried fruits, eggs, lean red meat, poultry, salmon, tuna, and whole grains. Iron in certain forms can be harder for our bodies to absorb, such as that found in fruits, vegetables, and grains. If you mix some lean meat, fish, or poultry with beans or dark leafy greens at a meal, you can improve absorption of vegetable sources of iron up to three times. Foods rich in vitamin C also increase iron absorption. For more information, click here: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/002422.htm>

Trainings & Events:

USDA Foods WBSCM Refresher Trainings:

It's time to get ready to place your USDA Foods orders for School Year 2014-2015! We will hold 5 refresher trainings around the state in March for food service managers who would like assistance in placing these orders and for new food service managers.

- Rutland: March 5th
- Milton: March 11th
- Newport: March 12th
- Hartford: March 25th
- Hartford: March 27th

All trainings are from 3-5pm. Please click here to register for a training location:

<https://creator.zoho.com/cheryl.4.3.68/usda-foods-wbscm-training/#Form:Home>.

National School Breakfast Week: March 3-7

Highlight, grow, and celebrate your breakfast program!

http://www.schoolnutrition.org/Level2_NSBW2014.aspx?id=18805

USDA Farm-to-School Grant Webinars

Webinars to help in your application for the USDA Farm to School Implementation and Planning Grants. More information, application requests, and webinar dates can be found here:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/fy-2015-farm-school-grant-program-funds-available>

Integrated Learning – A Food System Approach

A 10-week Course for Grade 7-12 Teachers, March 11th - May 20th at Montpelier High School

Service Learning has the potential to increase student engagement, and therefore achievement, by bringing relevance and rigor to your lessons. Why stop there? The complex nature of most authentic learning experiences provides many opportunities to further enhance student learning through cross-curricular connections. This course will provide teachers and prospective teachers the support and training necessary to create engaging, experiential units in their respective discipline, using the food system and the concept of sustainability as a vehicle for curricular integration. There is NO CHARGE unless you want Saint Michael's College credit (1 credit=\$110).

Register: <http://www.cssvt.org/teachers/register-now-for-spring-2013-professional-development-course>

Contact: Tom Sabo, 802-522-3586, toms@mpsvt.org

Save the Date! Tri-State Child Nutrition Conference

When: April 10, 2014

Where: Killington Resort, VT

Child Nutrition Programs of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont are teaming together to present a day long training event with some Child Nutrition Programs experts. The day-long conference will include three sessions of workshops as well as a keynote presentation by Scott Noyes. Workshop sessions will cover School Nutrition, Child & Adult Care, FFVP, Summer Food Service Program, USDA Foods and more. More information to follow.

USDA Farm to School Webinars

Two webinars each month will be offered to showcase the variety of ways school districts can purchase local foods.

The second and fourth Thursdays of the month at 2:00pm.

Upcoming schedule:

- Using the Informal Procurement Method – February 27
- Using Specifications to Target Local Products – March 13
- Working with Distributors – March 27

To register, please click [here](#).

Resources:

Help Low Income Families at Your School(s) with [Hunger Free Vermont](#)

Many families are unaware that receiving the Earned Income Tax Credit makes them eligible for food and nutrition benefits as well.

- Families who receive the VT Earned Income Tax Credit and have dependent children qualify for 3SquaresVT (formerly food stamps) without having to meet the income test typically required to establish eligibility; and once receiving a 3SquaresVT benefit, the children then qualify for free school meals as well.

This tax season, Hunger Free Vermont is spreading the word about this important connection, and we need your help! We have developed [short newsletter articles](#) and a [flyer](#) for you to share with families in your community. Please consider distributing and/or hanging up the flyer and share the short article through your school newsletter and on your school's website.

For more information about 3SquaresVT or EITC, or to receive printed copies of the flyer, contact Faye Conte at fconte@hungerfreevt.org or 802-865-0255.

Whole Grain Resource for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs

A Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-Rich Criteria.

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/WholeGrainResource.pdf>

Harvest of the Month by [Green Mountain Farm-to-School](#), [Food Connects](#) and [Upper Valley Farm to School](#):

February's *Harvest of the Month* is whole grains! Whole grains have deeply influenced the history and evolution of human civilization and have origins throughout the world. Whole grains are members of the true grass family, Poaceae. When eating a whole grain, you are receiving the greatest nutritional value. Look beyond breads to enjoy a spectrum of whole grains: wheat berry salad, popcorn with olive oil, fresh garlic and salt, rice and beans or oat-based granola!

Posters, recipes, kid-friendly eating tips, lesson plans and more can be found for FREE download at www.VermontHarvestoftheMonth.org.

New School Cuisine Cookbook

Our latest resource to help schools meet the new USDA meals pattern and use fresh and local products in school meals.

Available online! http://education.vermont.gov/documents/EDU-New_School_Cuisine_Cookbook.pdf

Serving Up a School Culture of Health, Wellness, and Nutrition

Promising Practices that provide lessons learned and recommendations for how to create a school culture that values the important role healthy food, nutrition education and physical activity play in education.

http://education.vermont.gov/documents/EDU-School_Nutrition_Serving_Up_School_Culture.pdf

Free, Online, College-level Courses in Food and Nutrition (and other subjects)

Available at [Coursera](#) and [EdX](#).

Find loads of resources and training opportunities on everything from regulations to recipes to nutrition education at:

[National Food Service Management Institute](#)

[School Nutrition Association](#)

[GCF Global Learning](#)

[School Meals Vermont](#)

State School Health Policy Matrix

A guide to state-level school health policies for competitive foods and beverages, physical education and physical activity, and administration of medication in the school environment. It outlines relevant state-level policies for each of these areas, including a direct link to the policy, and it indicates which political entity or agency adopted the policy or issued guidance. <https://chronicdisease.site-ym.com/?SchoolHealthPubs>

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VT Munch Times is [archived](#) on the Agency of Education website. For information which is three months or older, or for other questions, please contact Dani Bois, Child Nutrition Consultant, at (802) 828-0618 or dani.bois@state.vt.us.

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